1:Radin E-5 (1908-1913) 1923
NP12 Winnebago NP12

FIRST DIVISION OF THE CEREMONY—IN HONOR OF THE THUNDER-BIRDS

Introductory remarks by Blowsnake, informant.—In winter, in mid-winter, then it was that I used to pour tobacco.[9] That was the time I would go out and hunt for game.

Well, to-night, a vapor bath I shall take, and if I can secure food for boiling, that kind of a feast I shall give. As many of the leaders as have come, that many shall be with me as I take a vapor bath in the sweat lodge. We are now about to enter the sweat lodge, for everything is in readiness."[10]

SWEAT-LODGE RITUAL

We entered the sweat lodge and undressed, and after we had entered they (the outsiders) closed the lodge covering. I took both the tobacco and the other things I was to use as offerings with me."

Host's salutation and initial speech to participants.—"I greet you; I greet you all, war-bundle owners.[12] My grandparents, especially my grandfather,[13] had concentrated their minds upon this for me. The fireplace with which they blessed my grandfather,[14] that I am going to ask for myself. However weakly I may wobble about,[15] my elders will aid me. I am now going to pour a little tobacco and offer, my elders, whatever feast I am able to. War-bundle owners, I send forth my greetings to you. War-bundle owners, I greet you. Ye elders, I am about to pour tobacco for them (the spirits)."

Host's offering to Earthmaker.—"Hearken, Earthmaker, our father, I am about to offer you a handful of tobacco."[17] My ancestor Djō-benagwi'ŋxga[18] concentrated his mind upon you. The fireplaces with which you blessed him;[19] the small amount of life you granted to him; all, four times the blessings you bestowed upon my ancestor, that I ask of you directly. Also that I may have no troubles (in life)."

Host's offering to the chief of the Thunderbirds.—"To you, who live in the west, our grandfather, chief of the Thunderbirds, a handful of

[9] "Pouring tobacco" is the ritualistic term for giving a feast.

[10] The informant has passed to the present tense now, for he is actually giving an account of the last War-bundle Feast he gave and imagining that the writer is present.

[11] The word tobacco in Winnebago rituals is used as a generic expression for an offering. Thus the word *tastcrexge'ja* means, literally, "What we are to offer as tobacco."

[12] Literally, "Children of the bundle."

[13] He does not really mean grandparents, but elders.

[14] The word here used for fireplace is a ritualistic one. It means, literally, "That one throws within something, i. e., an offering." It also has here the secondary meaning of food.

[15] Used metaphorically.

[17] I. e., the regular offering.

[18] An ancestor of the informant.

[19] Here "fireplaces" mean blessings, for only those who had blessings could erect fireplaces, and as a fireplace was erected for each separate spirit, the greater their number the greater the number of blessings. In all rituals it is customary to speak of blessings received, as well as of personal accomplishments, with an exaggerated modesty.